

IN THE CLAIMS

1 (currently amended). A worm drive clamp comprising:

a worm drive member having a body with at least one spiral thread on an outer surface thereof, a head disposed above an upper end of said body, [and] a pawled portion disposed below a lower end of said body, and a knob disposed below said pawled portion; and

a flexible strap having a housing adapted to receive said drive member disposed toward a first end thereof, said strap being provided with a plurality of grooves on an inner surface thereof,

wherein said housing has a ratcheted recess in a bottom wall thereof adapted to engage said pawled portion when said drive member is situated in said housing, [and] a slot in said bottom wall adapted to receive said second end of said strap, and a through hole in said bottom wall sized to allow penetration by said knob such that said bottom wall is held between said knob and said pawled portion; and

as said second end of said strap is inserted upward through said slot when said drive member is situated in said housing, said grooves engage said thread, such that as said worm drive member is rotated clockwise, said strap is drawn further upward through said slot, while said pawled portion is engaged by said ratcheted recess to prevent counterclockwise rotation.

2. (Canceled)

3 (Currently Amended). A clamp according to Claim [2]1, wherein said strap has a tab disposed at said first end.

4. (Canceled)

5 (Currently Amended). A clamp according to Claim [2]1, wherein one or more of said grooves penetrate said strap so as to form slots.

6. (Canceled)

7. (New) A worm drive clamp comprising:

a worm drive member having a body with at least one spiral thread on an outer surface thereof, a head disposed above an upper end of said body, and a pawled portion disposed below a lower end of said body; and

a flexible strap having a housing adapted to receive said drive member disposed toward a first end thereof, said strap being provided with a plurality of grooves on an inner surface thereof and a plurality of spikes disposed on said inner surface between said housing and said grooves,

wherein said housing has a ratcheted recess in a bottom wall thereof adapted to engage said pawled portion when said drive member is situated in said housing, and a slot in said bottom wall adapted to receive said second end of said strap; and

as said second end of said strap is inserted upward through said slot when said drive member is situated in said housing, said grooves engage said thread, such that as said worm drive member is rotated clockwise, said strap is drawn further upward through said slot, while said pawled portion is engaged by said ratcheted recess to prevent counterclockwise rotation.

8. (New) A worm drive clamp comprising:

a worm drive member having a body with at least one spiral thread on an outer surface thereof, a head disposed above an upper end of said body, and a pawled portion disposed below a lower end of said body; and

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a flexible strap having a housing adapted to receive said drive member disposed toward a first end thereof, said strap being provided with a plurality of grooves on an inner surface thereof and with one or more indentations disposed between said grooves and said second end to temporarily hold said strap in engagement with said thread prior to rotation of said head,

wherein said housing has a ratcheted recess in a bottom wall thereof adapted to engage said pawled portion when said drive member is situated in said housing, and a slot in said bottom wall adapted to receive said second end of said strap; and

as said second end of said strap is inserted upward through said slot when said drive member is situated in said housing, said grooves engage said thread, such that as said worm drive member is rotated clockwise, said strap is drawn further upward through said slot, while said pawled portion is engaged by said ratcheted recess to prevent counterclockwise rotation.

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(united)